

## CLAIMS

1. A method for facilitating business processes communication comprising:
  - obtaining business process data from at least one first trading participant;
  - processing said business process data at a process management platform;
  - transmitting said business process data from said process management platform to at least one second trading participant.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said obtaining said business process data occurs at a process gateway.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein said process gateway interfaces with at least one legacy system at said at least one first trading participant.
4. The method of claim 2 wherein said process management platform broadcasts said business process data to a plurality of trading participants.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein business logic is applied to said business process data before said transmitting said business process data from said process management platform to said at least one second trading participant.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
modifying said business process data to conform said business  
process data to a uniform format.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said processing further comprises:  
archiving said business process data in a storage medium.

8. The method of claim 7 further comprising:  
providing said archived business process data to an entity for non-  
repudiation purposes.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein said business process data comprises at  
least one partner interface process.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein said business process data comprises  
technical information.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein said business process data comprises item  
acquisition data.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein said business process data comprises  
service acquisition data.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one first trading participant comprises an entity utilizing said business process data.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said entity comprises a purchaser.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein said entity comprises a supplier.

16. The method of claim 13 wherein said entity comprises a distributor.

17. The method of claim 13 wherein said entity comprises a manufacturer.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein said process management platform comprises a plurality of distributed systems.

19. The method of claim 1 wherein said process management platform is accessible via a business process interface associated with said at least one first trading participant.

20. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
providing said at least one first trading participant access to said business process interface.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein said access to said business process interface is provided via a web browser.

22. The method of claim 20 wherein said business process interface facilitates the transmission of data comprising at least a portion of said business process data.

23. The method of claim 20 wherein said business process interface facilitates the formatting of data comprising at least a portion of said business process data.

24. A method for facilitating business process communication comprising:  
obtaining business process data from a plurality of initiating trading participants;  
processing said business process data at a process management platform wherein said processing comprises determining at said process management platform one or more receiving trading participants for receiving said business process data;  
forwarding said business process data from said process management platform to said one or more receiving trading participants.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein said business process data is modified according to business criteria before said forwarding said business process data from said process management platform to said one or more receiving trading participants occurs.

26. A computer program product comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable program code embodied therein, said computer readable program code configured to:

obtain business process data from at least one first trading participant;

process said business process data at a process management platform accessible via an interconnection fabric;

transmit said business process data from said process management platform to at least one second trading participant.

27. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said computer readable program code configured to obtain said business process data executes at a process gateway.

28. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said process gateway interfaces with at least one legacy system at said at least one first trading participant and said at least one second trading participant.

29. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said process management platform broadcasts said business process data to a plurality of trading participants.

30. The computer program product of claim 26 further comprising:  
5 computer readable program code configured to modify said business process data to conform said business process data to a uniform format.

31. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said processing further comprises:  
archiving said business process data in a storage medium.

32. The computer program product of claim 31 further comprising:  
computer readable program code configured to provide said archived business process data to an entity for non-repudiation purposes.

33. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said business process data comprises at least one partner interface process.

34. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said business process data comprises technical information.

35. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said business process data comprises item acquisition data.

36. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said business process data comprises service acquisition data.

37. The computer program product of claim 26 wherein said at least one trading participant comprises an entity utilizing said business process data.

38. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said entity comprises a purchaser.

39. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said entity comprises a supplier.

40. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said entity comprises a distributor.

41. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said entity comprises a manufacturer.

42. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said process management platform comprises a plurality of distributed systems.

43. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said process management platform comprises a business process interface associated with said at least one trading participant and said at least one second interface.

44. The computer program product of claim 37 further comprising:  
computer readable program code configured to provide said at least one first trading participant and at least one second trading participant access to a business process interface.

45. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said business process interface is provided via a web browser.

46. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said business process interface facilitates the transmission of data comprising at least a portion of said business process data.

47. The computer program product of claim 37 wherein said business process interface facilitates the formatting of data comprising at least a portion of said business process data.

48. An apparatus for managing a plurality of business processes comprising:

a process management platform configured to obtain a plurality of business processes from a plurality of different entities wherein said plurality of business processes comprise a sequence of messages linked by a predefined workflow and exchanged over a predefined period of time;

a process gateway coupled to said process management platform via an interconnection fabric wherein said process gateway is associated with at least one of said plurality of different entities.

49. The apparatus of claim 48 further comprising:

a business process interface configured to facilitate the transmission and formatting of said plurality of business processes.

50. The apparatus of claim 48 wherein said sequence of messages collectively defines specific components associated with at least one of said entities participation in a business transaction.

51. A computer program product comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable program code for managing a plurality of business processes, said computer readable program code configured to:

obtain a plurality of business processes from a plurality of first entities wherein said plurality of business processes comprises a sequence

of messages linked by a predefined workflow and exchanged over a predefined period of time;

manage said plurality of business processes at a process management platform;

forwarding said plurality of business processes from said process management platform to at least one of a plurality of second entities.

52. The computer program product of claim 51 wherein said computer readable code configured to manage said plurality of business processes at said process management platform further comprises computer readable program code configured to:

determine if each of said plurality business processes conforms to a predefined format and format said plurality of business processes so that each of said plurality of business processes conforms to said predefined format when said plurality of business processes does not conform to said predefined format;

determine whether to archive said plurality business processes and archive said plurality of business process if said determination to archive said business processes is affirmative.

53. A method comprising:

obtaining a plurality of business processes at a process management platform;

combining said plurality of business processes to formulate a metaprocess at said process management platform.

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